CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

CD/PV.489
23 February 1989

ENGLISH

FINAL RECORD OF THE FOUR HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-NINTH PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Thursday, 23 February 1989, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. Aldo Pugliese (Italy)

GE.89-60326/0312B

The PRESIDENT: I declare open the 489th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

In accordance with its programme of work, the Conference will consider today agenda items 1, "Nuclear test ban", and 2, "Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament". However, in accordance with rule 30 of its rules of procedure, any member wishing to do so may raise any subject relevant to the work of the Conference.

I have on my list of speakers for today the representatives of Hungary, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Nigeria and Indonesia. I now give the floor to the representative of Hungary, Ambassador Varga.

Mr. VARGA (Hungary): Mr. President, as I am taking the floor for the first time during the 1989 session, I wish to offer to you the felicitations of my delegation on your presidency for the month of February, and to congratulate you on the effective fulfilling of your duties as President of the Conference on Disarmament. At the last but one plenary meeting for this month, one may say rightly that you have succeeded in giving the CD a dynamic start from the beginning of its 1989 session. My words of thanks go also to your distinguished predecessor, Ambassador Ardekani of Iran, who presided over our proceedings last August in an able and efficient way.

I would also like to join those representatives who have in their statements offered a hearty welcome to our new colleagues, the distinguished heads of delegations Ambassador Thant of Burma, Ambassador Sharma of India, Ambassador Houllez of Belgium, Ambassador Dietze of the German Democratic Republic, Ambassador Hyltenius of Sweden, Ambassador Reese of Australia, Ambassador Kikanke of Zaire, Ambassador Bullut of Kenya, Ambassador Kamal of Pakistan, Ambassador Messaoud of Algeria and Ambassador Vajnar of Czechoslovakia. I am looking forward to co-operating with our new colleagues, as my delegation did with their predecessors.

Following with attention the statements made from the beginning of the 1989 session of the Conference on Disarmament, it seems to be the unanimous view that the CD has started its 1989 session in an auspicious international atmosphere. The positive changes that have recently taken place in East-West relations, and particularly in the relations between the two leading nuclear Powers, have resulted in a considerable lessening of tension in international relations. The process of gradual elimination of military confrontation in the field of nuclear weapons has got under way with the signing, the entry into force and the beginning of the implementation of the INF agreement. We do hope that the world will see sustained momentum in, and results produced by, the continuing talks between the USSR and the United States on 50 per cent reductions in their strategic nuclear arsenals, with the continuing authority of the ABM Treaty upheld.

As a result of the CSCE follow-up negotiations in Vienna, talks will start in a few weeks' time on the reduction of conventional forces in Europe from the Atlantic to the Urals, with the participation of the member States of the two military alliances, and likewise on new security-building measures, with the participation of all States involved in the CSCE process.

(Mr. Varga, Hungary)

My Government welcomes the fact that the question of conventional disarmament in our continent has become the focus of attention. We do hope that the forthcoming talks in Europe will eliminate the kind of security which rests on centuries-old military confrontation and a balance of fear in the continent. That must be replaced by a security based on political co-operation and the removal of the material basis of the military threat. It is necessary to abandon thinking in terms of "ally and enemy", in categories of black and white, and to start easing - step by step - the political, economic and psychological burdens placed on the peoples of the continent by the existence and maintenance of huge regular armies.

The decision by the Soviet Union concerning the unilateral decrease of its armed forces in Europe contributes to the chances of success of the forthcoming negotiations. So do the decisions by some other Warsaw Treaty member States to decrease their conventional armed forces and military budgets unilaterally.

My Government welcomes and highly appreciates the new and positive developments in the international situation. It is making every effort to sustain and strengthen that positive trend and to use it for widening political and economic co-operation among States and for the promotion of the cause of human rights and disarmament. In this spirit, and in order to contribute to the process of European détente and to the success of the forthcoming negotiations on the reduction of armed forces and conventional armaments in Europe, the Government of the Hungarian People's Republic - upon the suggestion of the country's defence leadership - has decided to reduce the number of troops in the Hungarian People's Army by approximately 9 per cent and to decrease its armaments in parallel. This unilateral measure has become possible as a consequence of the favourable events in the international situation, on the one hand, and is designed to promote the further improvement of the international atmosphere on the other. It is also in accordance with the expectations of Hungarian public opinion that the military budget of the country should be further reduced.

In accordance with the decision, the armed forces will be decreased by 9,300 troops, 8.8 per cent of the total. This amount mainly comprises conscripts, but also includes 2,100 officers and warrant officers. The reduction of the armed forces and armaments will invoke the disbandment of one tank brigade and one home air defence squadron. The military hardware withdrawn from service will be deactivated, used for civilian purposes if convertible for such purposes, or else destroyed. The execution of the unilateral reduction of the armed forces will commence in the very near future, and will be accomplished by next year.

I am confident that the negotiations on conventional armed forces in Europe will not only result in arms limitations and reductions in existing arsenals, but also gradually lead to a qualitatively new form of international security in Europe. This will be instrumental in reducing military confrontation in international relations as a whole, leaving more room for co-operative forms of security, for joint efforts reaching beyond frontiers and military blocks, seeking solutions for the global problems facing mankind.

The encouraging events in the domain of disarmament are not confined to the bilateral talks between the USSR and the United States, or to Europe. The

(Mr. Varga, Hungary)

Paris Conference of States Parties to the 1925 Geneva Protocol and other Interested States testified to the success of efforts made towards disarmament on a truly global, multilateral basis. The Conference accomplished its task by accepting its final document by consensus. It is of paramount importance that States renounced "any recourse to chemical weapons by completely eliminating them". That is a timely and welcome development in the face of recent events that have caused considerable concern among world public opinion.

It is in complete accordance with the aspirations of the disarmament policy of the Hungarian Government that the Paris Conference and the 150 or so States participating expressed a unanimous position as to the prohibition of the development, production, stockpiling and use of all chemical weapons, and the destruction of existing stocks. The Conference urged the Conference on Disarmament - thereby giving it a clear mandate - to "redouble its efforts, as a matter of urgency, to resolve expeditiously the remaining issues and to include the convention at the earliest date". The Declaration appealed to all States "to make, in an appropriate way, a significant contribution to the negotiations in Geneva by undertaking efforts in the relevant fields". The Hungarian Government is determined to contribute to the earliest successful conclusion of the negotiations and to sign the convention as soon as it is opened for signature.

My delegation is confident that the Paris Conference has created a momentum for the ongoing Geneva negotiations. This momentum is upheld in an appropriate way by the work of the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons under the dynamic guidance of Ambassador Morel, Chairman of the Committee. It is a matter of regret, however, that because of well-known circumstances the CD has been unable to come to an agreement on improving the mandate of the Ad hoc Committee. My delegation is of the opinion that the mandate given to the Ad hoc Committee lags far behind both the actual possibilities created by the Paris Conference and the pressing political necessities of the international situation. It is not always possible to do everything that is necessary, but what is possible should always be done. The consensus reached in the First Committee of the General Assembly last fall and during the Paris Conference this year demands and makes possible more than is contained in the present mandate. I hope we will be able to rectify this during this session.

In recent years it has become habitual for delegates speaking about our negotiations on chemical weapons to state that the most promising and most ripe item on the Conference's agenda is the prohibition of chemical weapons. Statements from time to time have gone even further, predicting or demanding the immediate solution of all the outstanding problems, and the conclusion of the convention before the end of the given year. Only a few weeks after the Paris Conference, we must all realize that the fruit is far from being ripe for harvest. The problem of chemical weapons demands untiring efforts and purposeful negotiations - with that we agree most readily, and are partners in them. However, the problem also demands an objective and sober evaluation of the pending questions, a sincere will and determination to solve them, and the concerted action of all interested States in one and the same direction.

The Paris Conference has created favourable conditions; now it is for us to live with them. First, we must do everything to avoid a situation where

(Mr. Varga, Hungary)

the solution of this problem is held hostage to other problems, no matter how urgent and important they are. The convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons must not fall hostage to certain aspirations.

There are many pending questions, but we must select the ones that are vital to the solution of the problem as a whole. Verification, we all agree, is one of them, maybe the one. The satisfactory solution of all issues in this context must, therefore, figure first on the list of priorities of the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons.

Our delegation has always asked for a strict and most effective verification system. As Hungary does not possess and does not intend to possess chemical weapons, and as the chemical or engineering industry in our country is in no way geared to chemical warfare, we are in favour of creating a foolproof verification system. That applies, I must add, not only to the prohibition of chemical weapons, but also to all other agreements relating to international security and disarmament.

Verification of a CW convention would require various forms and methods of international verification. For obvious reasons, Hungary is mainly interested in the verification of the non-production of chemical weapons in civilian or commercial industry, that is, in devising and negotiating the relevant provisions of the draft convention. That is why last year we welcomed the initiative of the Soviet Union aimed at testing verification procedures to that effect.

The idea, as usual, started developing only at a slow pace but then, towards the end of the session, the process gained momentum. Following open-ended consultations, a useful working paper was put on our table, containing guidelines and check-lists for trial inspections. In Hungary, as in several other countries around the world, preparations started without any further delay to organize and conduct national trial inspections. At an informal meeting of the CW Committee on 7 December, over a dozen delegations were already in a position to provide information about the status of the preparations. The Hungarian delegation was among them, and was able even to go a step further, giving a preliminary report on our first trial inspection.

Today I am glad to present an official document containing a detailed report on that experiment (CD/890), which will also be presented in due course to the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons. The paper was prepared by Hungarian experts who participated in both the preparations for and the conduct of the trial inspection. I believe it speaks for itself, and I will therefore refrain from any further introduction. I only wish to add that our team of experts is already engaged in the drafting of new undertakings in the fairly unknown land of on-site inspections in the chemical industry.

The Hungarian delegation feels convinced that the initiative to conduct full-scale experiments was most proper and timely. We are looking forward to a series of meetings in the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons that will have to be convened before the end of the spring session for the purpose of formal presentations of reports on the first series of national trial inspections. That series of meetings should be organized well in advance so that experts may come and participate actively in presenting, discussing and

(Mr. Varga, Hungary)

evaluating the reports. Sufficient time should be allocated to the meetings so that experience can be properly analysed, and useful, practical conclusions drawn. We are aware that a number of trial inspections will be held only later, but we still prefer to organize the first exchange of experience now, before quantity might be detrimental to quality. A similar exchange will, of course, have to be held some time during the summer session to continue the exercise.

When all the trial inspections have been conducted, reported and evaluated, a new set of guidelines, check-lists and other practical aids will have to be developed for the third stage: a series of trial inspections with multilateral participation. We can foresee that the exercise will take quite some time, but if it is spent well, it is worth spending. Only on the basis of such experience can we hope to devise the relevant provisions of the draft convention. However, if we accept that verification is the key to a disarmament agreement and we certainly have to agree on that, then there is hardly any shortcut to it. Objective and sober evaluation of the situation has obliged me to state what I have ventured to say.

Dealing with the question of chemical weapons at some length does not mean that my delegation neglects other items on the agenda of the Conference. We share the view of the majority of the delegations that the CD should address the issues of nuclear disarmament in a substantive way. A central task in this field is the comprehensive test ban. We continue to hold that the prohibition - once and for ever - of nuclear weapon tests would be the single most effective measure on the way to halting the nuclear arms race. Continuing nuclear testing and the modernization of nuclear weapons emerging as a consequence of it puts at risk the strengthening of the non-proliferation Treaty and the non-proliferation régime as a whole. Difficulties encountered in solving the deadlock around the NTB issue have been evident for years. The situation cannot be accepted, however, for sober political reasons. We believe that a realistic compromise can be built around the formal proposal by Czechoslovakia that the Committee should "initiate, as a first step towards achieving nuclear test-ban treaty, substantive work on specific and interrelated test ban issues, including structure and scope as well as verification and compliance". I am confident, Mr. President, that you and your distinguished successor will do whatever is possible for the establishment of the appropriate subsidiary body where substantive work on a CTB can eventually be started.

My delegation, while aware of the heavy workload to be placed on delegations by the accelerated pace of negotiations on CW, is of the opinion that appropriate attention should also be paid to other important items on our agenda. We have acknowledged with satisfaction that the ad hoc committees on the CPD and security assurances have started substantive work. We consider that continued multilateral action is required for the prevention of an arms race in outer space. It is vital that the mandate issue should be overcome as expeditiously as possible and that the Outer Space Committee should start substantive work on improving the existing international legal régime governing outer space. The Committee could do useful work on the issue of prohibiting ASAT weapons and providing immunity to satellites in outer space. The proposal by the Soviet Union for the establishment of an outer space

(Mr. Varga, Hungary)

organization and an international inspectorate for verifying activities in outer space are issues which can provide for a sensible and useful task for the Committee and a good option for its deliberations.

The prohibition of radiological weapons and the prohibition of attacks on nuclear facilities have long been the subject of negotiations. It is our position that both issues could be settled within a comparatively short time given the necessary flexibility from all participants in the negotiations. We are sure that by building on the results achieved so far the Committee on radiological weapons can make considerable headway. The complexity of these questions is far less great than that of the problems of chemical weapons or outer space. Nevertheless, the successful completion of these negotiations could be of considerable political and practical value for all countries with or without a nuclear industry. An agreement on the prohibiition of attacks on nuclear facilities, apart from its significance for the safety of peaceful nuclear activities, could also be a positive element in strengthening the non-proliferation régime.

In concluding my statement, Mr. President, I would like to assure you that my delegation will be ready to co-operate with you as always in finding solutions to the problems I mentioned in my statement.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Hungary for his statement, and for the kind words that he addressed to me. I now give the floor to the representative of Yugoslavia, Ambassador Kosin.

Mr. KOSIN (Yugoslavia): It gives me particular pleasure to congratulate you, the representative of neighbouring Italy, with which Yugoslavia maintains high-level friendly relations and long-standing and good co-operation, on your election as President and on your successful guidance of our Conference. Your great competence and devotion to this responsible task have once again been confirmed. I know from my personal experience, having served as Ambassador to your country, how much Italy contributes to the creation of conditions conducive to the success of disarmament efforts. Yugoslav-Italian co-operation stands out as a substantial complement to security in our part of Europe, as well as an important element of stability in the continent in general. My appreciation and thanks go to your predecessor, Ambassador Ardekani of Iran, who so competently presided over the Conference during September last year and throughout the inter-sessional period.

I am taking this opportunity to warmly welcome in our midst our new colleagues who have arrived since my last plenary address - Ambassador Aung Thant of Burma, Ambassador Sharma of India, Ambassador Varga of Hungary, Ambassador Houllez of Belgium, Ambassador Hyltenius of Sweden, Ambassador Dietze of the German Democratic Republic, Ambassador Reese of Australia, Ambassador Kamal of Pakistan, Ambassador Bullut of Kenya, Ambassador Kikanke of Zaire, Ambassador Chaalal of Algeria and Ambassador Vajnar of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic. I can assure them all of our full co-operation. To their predecessors we extend our best wishes in their new assignments.

We are at the outset of yet another period when our ability to translate into reality the potentialities created by the improved international environment is going to be thoroughly tested. The best way to pass the test

(Mr. Kosin, Yugoslavia)

would be to steer the energies released by the changes towards stepping up the disarmament process and strengthening the role of our Conference as the single multilateral negotiating body in this field.

The developments in 1988 and in early 1989 have greatly enhanced the positive evolution in many crucial sectors of international life. The first real and tangible results in the bilateral and regional disarmament dialogue have been achieved. It is never superfluous to speak about such welcome developments. We do it not to create unfounded optimism, let alone spreading illusions, but to permit ourselves a rapid perception and thorough understanding of their positive traits, so as to build on experience and initiate and conduct the proper actions. This is all the more needed as the positive evolution is accompanied by contradictory signals arising from the fact that qualitative aspects of the arms race remain untouched, while economic lagging behind and instability facing the majority of mankind are shaking the already fragile security structure.

It is very encouraging that the right conclusions are beginning to be drawn from experience, confirming the vainness of the policy of overarmament and the failure of efforts to shape the world by military power. Such a policy has not only fallen short of its expected results, but has been discarded as illegitimate by the international community. Indeed, the substantial improvement in East-West relations and co-ordination in resolving regional crises, as well as an unprecedented negotiating effort in the field of disarmament, primarily at the bilateral and regional levels, also open up new prospects for multilateral endeavours, including those in our Conference. In spite of the outcome of SSOD-III, the Paris Conference on the prohibition of chemical weapons proved that a number of critical disarmament and security issues cannot be solved without common efforts. This is the reason why I would like to comment on that gathering in a wider context, as evidence of the validity and vitality of a multilateral approach to disarmament - the more so as it reaffirmed the lasting value of the Final Document of SSOD-I.

Turning for a moment to the current disarmament negotiations, allow me to underline the significance we attach to the Vienna agreement on conventional disarmament in Europe. I want to stress the global character of that regional agreement, which is due to the role of Europe as the most heavily armed and divided continent. We see in its implementation the beginning of the formation of a new security order in Europe, ensuring adequate participation for all countries, with CSCE as its central structure. In this way conventional disarmament may obtain higher priority, which it well deserves, as many wars have been waged with conventional weapons and tens of million people killed.

Turning back again to the Paris Conference, whose outcome is of relevance to us here and now, I think that its significance transcends by far the declaration of political intentions. It contains a number of basic positions that deserve to be analysed at several levels: the consolidation of the lasting validity of the Geneva Protocol, condemnation of the use of chemical weapons and a pledge that they will never be used again, an appeal to our Conference to strive for the earliest possible conclusion of a convention imposing a complete and universal ban on the development, stockpiling and use of any chemical weapon, and of course destruction of the existing arsenals, as

(Mr. Kosin, Yugoslavia)

the only answer to the problems posed by chemical weapons. It is extremely important that the role of the United Nations was duly recognized. Thus, the Paris Conference provided a major stimulus to disarmament negotiations on CW, but its reach is more universal, as it reflects the widest international consensus ever attained on one concrete issue of disarmament in all its dimensions.

In the new situation we cannot behave as if there were no Paris Conference, or, of course, as if it had resolved all the issues. For if, after Paris, there are fewer dilemmas, we still cannot ignore the profound differences on a number of tangible issues. The international community has endorsed the Paris Conference as an expression of a will to proceed with chemical disarmament at a faster pace, and to start dealing with the core of the problems, with the objective of finalizing the convention - in other words, to start genuine negotiations on drafting the convention. We can do so because the Paris Declaration contains highly specific understandings on where and how fast we should move. To that end the proclamation of a moratorium on chemical weapons production would be most helpful for our negotiations.

The Paris consensus has undoubtedly deprived chemical weapons of any legitimacy by unconditionally condemning their use and recording agreement on their complete elimination. It is therefore a major step towards the universality of the future CW convention.

We are aware of the difficulties involved in negotiations - of the problems arising, for instance, from the complexity of verification, undiminished security for all States, or protection of victims of chemical attack. Co-operation in the development of civil chemical industry is also one of the key questions. These difficulties are yet another reason to redouble our efforts, as required under the Paris Declaration. We therefore see the renewed political will not only as an expression of adherence to the ultimate goals, but as a readiness to settle unresolved issues. Without any intention of disputing the achievements of the last year, it nevertheless seems to us that the rhythm of negotiations is not in conformity with often reiterated political commitments and growing coherence in the process of confidence-building. In our view the changed French position on security stocks, followed by the broad range of trial inspections and work done on assistance and protection, have strengthened the convergence of views, which transcends what is contained in the text of the report.

Irrespective of the fact that we cannot be satisfied with what we have achieved so far, and I think that we could have done better, I wish to pay tribute to the Chairman of the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons, Ambassador Sujka, for his dedication and his initiatives in clarifying a number of sensitive issues and extending the negotiations to new chapters of the convention. My delegation agrees to the restructuring and reorganization of our work and the establishment of five groups to cover the main problems relevant to the entirety of the convention. I wish the incoming President, Ambassador Morel, every success. I am confident that, with his inherent dynamism, diplomatic skill and mastery of the subject, he will compel us, at least, to work harder, better and faster.

The future CW convention will be a sort of a model, not only for future disarmament agreements, but for a wider international co-operation,

(Mr. Kosin, Yugoslavia)

introducing new qualitative ingredients. To play such a role the convention must be acceptable to all, in other words, it must be based on the undiminished security of all its signatories and their full equality in rights and obligations. To become global, verifiable, universal and non-discriminatory, and in particular to be effective, it should not only prevent the production of chemical weapons and ensure destruction of the existing arsenals, but provide for adequate assistance to the victims of the use or threat of use of chemical weapons. It must also ensure co-operation in technological and economic development in the utilization of chemicals for peaceful purposes, and lay the foundations for an effective but rational international mechanism for control and verification, which would rely on the United Nations to the maximum possible extent. I want to repeat once more that adequate solutions regarding economic and technological co-operation will greatly enhance the universal acceptability of the convention and the equality of all members of the international community. May I recall the Yugoslav proposal at SSOD-III for a special United-Nations-sponsored conference for the signing of the convention?

The fact that I have dwelt on the chemical weapons topic should not be taken as neglect of other priority issues, primarily those concerned with nuclear and space disarmament. I wish to remind you of our often reiterated position on the significance and urgency of our Conference's beginning substantive work on the nuclear test ban. We do not question the validity of the step-by-step approach to this issue, but we cannot see it as an end in itself or as a reason for weakening, let alone eliminating, the role of our Conference. Preventing the CD's work on the NTB is not only contrary to the obligations assumed under the NPT and the PTBT, whose multilateral character has never been disputed, but constitutes open neglect of the concern of the wide international community and even limits the value of negotiations and agreements concluded or to be concluded on nuclear disarmament.

That is why we have to establish, as soon as possible, a committee to deal with this issue, which is not by chance the first item on our agenda. Our preference, of course, goes to the mandate presented to the Conference by the Group of 21 last year. But we are ready to consider and accept any suggestion that would help us move to substantive discussions on this issue, which is crucial to overall disarmament policy. We hope that the process of negotiations on various aspects of nuclear disarmament will pave the way for more constructive positions on this issue.

Nuclear tests are bound up with the whole problem of science and technology, which if left unresolved would make disarmament an incomplete and fragile undertaking, while negotiations will keep being outpaced by technological advance. We welcomed the decision of the General Assembly to initiate a study of this problem, which will no doubt encourage closer international consideration of the subject. It is clear that the issue could not be resolved by prohibiting specific technologies, still less by any idea of halting or slowing down research. It must, however, remain present on our agenda more than it has been so far, in terms of better co-ordination, greater transparency and above all wider co-operation.

Another priority for immediate action is the item on prevention of an arms race in outer space. It is high time to start addressing these issues in

(Mr. Kosin, Yugoslavia)

a more substantive way, in view of the need to take measures to institute an improved legal régime conducive to the conversion of space into an area of peaceful co-operation. The level of discussion about this issue thus far has been very beneficial, in terms of clarification of its broad aspects, submission of proposals and understanding of others' positions. However, this is the reason for us to believe that the conditions favour a move forward. Among priority measures which could contribute to both confidence-building and improvement of the security environment are guarantees of the immunity and protection of satellites. This is of universal importance because of the role of satellite technology in promoting development for all, and particularly developing countries. We expect the main space Powers to continue their restraint in developing anti-satellite weapons, which should be translated into binding international agreements.

One of the unavoidable issues in any debate about disarmament is the strengthening of the role of the United Nations in this as well as in other fields of international relations. The United Nations cannot consolidate its role in resolving hotbeds of crisis and in peace-keeping operations while remaining on the sidelines of disarmament negotiations. We therefore point to the importance of the General Assembly resolution adopted with only two abstentions about the role of the United Nations, including special sessions and multilateralism in general. Although our Conference has a special relationship with the United Nations, its role will largely depend on the strengthened role of the United Nations and the global multilateral approach, not as a substitute for any negotiating table, but as a source of initiative and creation of order acceptable to all. We have, however, to consolidate the role of our Conference by our own results.

The international community is, one might say, in a kind of permanent session. This year significant efforts and events will be forthcoming. I would like to mention the summit of the non-aligned countries to be held in September in Belgrade. As in the past, this gathering will certainly give a major contribution to disarmament and lend its support to our Conference within its confirmed global philosophy of peace, disarmament and security. I would remind you that much of what is going on today, concerning priorities, concepts, approaches to peace, disarmament and security, appeared long ago in the documents adopted by the non-aligned countries and in their perception of the system of international relations.

It is essential for our Conference to become an integral part of all these efforts and assert its ability, more than in the past, to answer the new challenges. The CD must therefore encourage and facilitate participation by non-members in its work, and first of all in negotiations on chemical weapons. In its internal functioning our Conference must become sufficiently flexible to be able, within its general mandate, to address in a substantive manner any issue on its agenda, depending on its lasting priorities but also depending on current needs. Without excluding other important items, I believe that we will have to devote most of our energies this year to the chemical weapons negotiations.

If we take as our point of departure the message of the United Nations Secretary-General, who warned us of the challenges and the road we have traversed in recent years, realism acquires a new shape. Free from the illusion that we have reached the turning-point, I still think that we may

(Mr. Kosin, Yugoslavia)

look more optimistically at the possibilities generated by the positive evolution of facts and ideas. We also have to consider how we could promote our own work if we are to attain the common goals.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Yugoslavia for his statement, and for the kind words that he addressed to me and to my country. I should like now to give the floor to the representative of Bulgaria, Ambassador Kostov.

Mr. KOSTOV (Bulgaria): Mr. President, I have already had an opportunity to congratulate you on your election as President of the Conference for the month of February. Now that your mandate is coming to a close I wish only to add that during this month, in my capacity as Co-ordinator of the Group of Socialist Countries, I have been in a position to fully appreciate your high human and professional qualities. I would also like to congratulate your predecessor, Ambassador Ardekani of Iran, on his skilful guidance of the Conference's work.

I avail myself of this opportunity to congratulate and wish every success to my new colleagues, the distinguished representatives of Algeria, Australia, Belgium, Czechoslovakia, the German Democratic Republic, India, Kenya, Pakistan, Sweden and Zaire. I would like to assure them of my wish to maintain with them the excellent relations I enjoyed with their predecessors.

If we try to summarize the facts and phenomena in contemporary international relations, and to extract from them the most characteristic features for some time past, it could be said that the new political thinking, though slowly and not so quickly as we would wish, is making its way in international life. Ideological inertia is gradually being overcome. Confrontation is giving way to constructive dialogue and business-like negotiations. As a result the atmosphere in international relations is being improved, concrete results are being achieved, prerequisites are being created and possibilities are being opened up for the achievement of agreements on international problems which, until recently, were assigned a place in the realm of Utopia rather than in the realm of reality.

The chronology of events in the past few months is an indicative illustration of this conclusion. On 7 December 1988 M.S. Gorbachev made a remarkable statement at the forty-third session of the United Nations General Assembly. And if Winston Churchill's speech in Fulton laid the ideological foundations of the cold war, now we have every reason to say that M.S. Gorbachev's speech marks the beginning of the end of that gloomy period in international relations. In taking decisions involving considerable unilateral reductions in their armed forces and military budgets, the USSR and its allies have provided convincing proof of their political good will.

On 27 January 1989, on a proposal made by T. Zhivkov, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party and President of the State Council, a joint session of the Council of Ministers and the State Council of Bulgaria decided to reduce the country's military budget for 1989 by 12 per cent, and to reduce the military forces by 10,000 servicemen, 200 tanks, 200 artillery systems, 20 aeroplanes and 5 naval units by the end of 1990. This decision - which I have asked to be circulated as a

(Mr. Kostov, Bulgaria)

CD document - was prompted by the successful development of the pan-European process, the favourable conditions for the further lessening of military confrontation, and the consolidation of European and world security on the basis of trust and co-operation, as well as by the arrangements arrived at between the Warsaw Treaty member countries.

On 19 January this year, after 27 months of intensive work, the Vienna meeting came to an end with the adoption of a final document which marks the highest point in the development of the pan-European Helsinki process. That document is a common denominator of consent to seek ways and means of instituting qualitatively new and upgraded relations between European countries. The final document is convincing evidence of the potential which may spring from a good-will dialogue between countries - a dialogue which leads to the realization of universal values based on a balance of national interests.

In the field of disarmament, the agreement on the mandate for negotiations on the reduction of armed forces and conventional armaments in Europe is an undeniable success of the Vienna meeting. The forthcoming negotiations should lead to stability and security in Europe at the lowest possible level of armed forces and conventional weapons. It was also decided at the Vienna meeting to resume the work of the Conference on Confidence- and Security-building Measures and Disarmament in Europe.

On 27 January 1989, a joint session of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party, the State Council and the Council of Ministers pointed out that "the Vienna meeting ended with results which, being based on the Helsinki Final Act, mark steps towards greater security and the deepening of mutually beneficial co-operation in all fields of international relations", and qualified the results of the meeting as "a new phase in the development of East-West relations on the European continent".

On 31 January this year, in Sofia, the Committee of Ministers of Defence of the Warsaw Treaty member countries adopted a "Declaration on the correlation of the armed forces and armaments of the Warsaw Treaty Organization and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in Europe and adjacent water areas". We hope that this document, which was circulated today as an official document of the CD (CD/888), will contribute to the strengthening of trust and to preparations for negotiations on the reduction of armed forces and conventional weapons in Europe, which are to begin in a few days.

An undeniable achievement of multilateral diplomacy was the Paris Conference on the prohibition of chemical weapons. One hundred and forty-nine countries reached a consensus on a problem both complex and important. After the detailed and eloquent presentation of the Final Act of the Paris Conference by Mr. Roland Dumas, Minister for Foreign Affairs of France, it would be redundant to dwell again on the merits of that document. All the elements of the Final Act have equal moral and political force. However, if we are to single out just one element of particular immediate importance for the work of the Conference on Disarmament, it should undoubtedly be the emphasis laid at the Paris Conference on "the necessity of concluding, at an early date, a convention on the prohibition of the development, production, stockpiling and use of all chemical weapons, and on their destruction", and

(Mr. Kostov, Bulgaria)

its explicit call to the CD "to redouble its efforts, as a matter of urgency, to resolve expeditiously the remaining issues and to conclude the convention at the earliest date".

It would be fair to note that the success of the Paris Conference would hardly have been possible without the years-long work of the Conference on Disarmament and the progress made in the elaboration of the draft convention. It could be said, without exaggeration, that the core of the consensus achieved in Paris was gradually taking shape in the negotiations held in the Conference on Disarmament. In this vein the Paris Final Document stands both to the credit and to the debit of the CD.

The last report of the Ad hoc Committee clearly shows both the achievements and the blanks in the elaboration of the draft convention. The progress in the negotiations is illustrated by the removal of appendix III, and by the texts dealing with chemical weapons production facilities and economic co-operation and the final clauses of the convention. It should also be noted that agreement was reached to hold an international experiment in the civil chemical industry and that "national trial inspections" have been or will be carried out. The meeting of experts from the chemical industry also played a useful role. I would like to take this opportunity to express to the former Chairman, Ambassador Sujka (Poland), the gratitude of my delegation for his tireless efforts aimed at ensuring progress in the negotiations. I would also like to thank the three chairmen of the working groups, whose contribution also deserves high appreciation.

The common task of the Conference on agenda item 4 is a clear and indisputable one - to intensify efforts in order to conclude the elaboration of a convention on chemical weapons. This goal is within reach provided the work of the Ad hoc Committee concentrates on the solving of the complex problems still pending. Without trying to exhaust the question or to set priorities, we hold the view that the following problems are of key importance: the order of destruction of chemical weapons and their production facilities, i.e. the need to ensure the implementation of the principle of undiminished security in the first 10 years after the convention comes into effect; conclusion of the elaboration of provisions on all aspects of verification, and in particular those dealing with challenge inspections and verification of non-production of chemical weapons; and reaching an agreement at least in principle on the composition of the Executive Council. At the present stage a number of aspects of some pending problems require an integrated approach to take fully into account the existing relationship among them. For that reason we believed that it was justifiable to reorganize the work of the Ad hoc Committee with the purpose of creating as many prerequisites as possible for holding intensive and fruitful negotiations. Having supported the efforts of Ambassador Morel (France) aimed at this goal, my delegation wishes to assure him of its readiness to co-operate with him in the future as well.

While recognizing the high priority of the work on agenda item 4, "Chemical weapons", we have never deemed it warranted for the Conference to confine itself to serious and business-like negotiations on just one agenda item. Proceeding from this position of principle I would like to express my delegation's views on items 1, 5 and 6 of the agenda.

(Mr. Kostov, Bulgaria)

The nuclear test ban has for many years rightly been pointed out to be one of the most acute problems in the field of disarmament. It is therefore no mere coincidence that it has been placed at the top of our agenda. Acute problems need urgent treatment. Urgency, however, is regrettably not the word that one would use in describing the way this subject has so far been dealt with in the Conference on Disarmament. The inability of the Conference to break a procedural impasse on one of its priority items is no sign of political wisdom, especially in the new international climate that is taking shape today. Bulgaria stands ready to subscribe to any mandate for an ad hoc committee on item 1 that would enable the Conference on Disarmament to proceed with concrete work. The proposal of the Group of 21 contained in document CD/829 offers such a possibility. Other compromise solutions could also be pursued. For instance, we believe that substantive work on all aspects of a nuclear test-ban treaty could be initiated on the basis of the proposal made by Czechoslovakia in document CD/863. One of the aspects where early progress could be expected is elaboration of the elements of the verification system of a comprehensive nuclear test-ban treaty. Bulgaria fervently hopes that the ongoing Soviet-American talks on the subject will promptly yield concrete results. Any militarily significant interim measures that lead to a comprehensive test ban would be most welcome. Bilateral and multilateral efforts should complement and reinforce each other. There is enough room for both of them as long as the final objective is constantly and consistently kept in sight.

The item "Prevention of an arms race in outer space" remains high on the agenda of our Conference. Resolution 43/70 of the United Nations General Assembly reiterated once again that the Conference has the primary role in the negotiation of a multilateral agreement or agreements, as appropriate, on the prevention of an arms race in outer space in all its aspects, and requested the Conference to re-establish an ad hoc committee with an adequate mandate with a view to undertaking such negotiations. We earnestly hope that this year the mandate of the ad hoc committee will be agreed upon expeditiously, which will enable the Conference to proceed with substantive consideration of the subject. The content of the "adequate" mandate referred to by the General Assembly is of course subject to different interpretations. In my understanding, intensive and fruitful work is possible and needed even under the present mandate. There are a lot of proposals and initiatives that should be further pursued within the ad hoc committee. Such issues as a moratorium and ban on ASAT weapons and guarantees of the immunity of space objects, the establishment of an international space inspectorate and other verification mechanisms are well identified and, in our opinion, ripe for practical solutions, given political will on the part of all member States. We also note with interest the proposals and ideas regarding the multilateralization of the ABM Treaty and the Soviet-American agreement on the notification of long-range ballistic missile launches, the strengthening of the 1975 registration Convention, and so on. It will be very useful if the authors of these proposals elaborate on their ideas in a more detailed manner.

The Bulgarian delegation will also favour the establishment of a group of experts to consider verification issues in the context of specific aspects of the prevention of an arms race in outer space. The consideration of these and other issues would not, in our view, preclude the search for comprehensive

(Mr. Kostov, Bulgaria)

solutions of the type envisaged, for example, in USSR documents CD/476 and CD/274. My country's main objective remains unchanged - outer space must remain free from weapons of any kind. It is our conviction that the Conference could make a significant contribution towards the achievement of this objective.

The question of security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons is one to which Bulgaria attaches great importance. It is our firm conviction that the most effective and reliable guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons is nuclear disarmament and the complete elimination of nuclear weapons. Pending the achievement of that objective, non-nuclear-weapon States which are not in a position to pose any nuclear threat to other countries have every right to expect reliable assurances against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.

Our Conference is entering its tenth year of negotiation on this subject. The negotiations have revealed that some specific difficulties are related to different perceptions of the security interests of nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States, as well as to the complex nature of the issues involved. Bulgaria is of the view that the military doctrines of military alliances, and particularly those of the nuclear-weapon States which are members of those alliances, have a most direct bearing on the subject of security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States. In this context I would like to recall that the Warsaw Treaty States declared in their Berlin document of 29 May 1987 (CD/755) that, firstly, they will never under any circumstances initiate military action against any State or alliance of States unless they are themselves the target of an armed attack, and, secondly, they will never be the first to employ nuclear weapons. Fresh political and military approaches to global security issues would make it possible to find innovative solutions in the field of disarmament in general, and make a breakthrough in our negotiations on "negative security assurances" in particular.

The Bulgarian delegation reaffirms its readiness to participate in the search for a solution to the problem of "negative security assurances", based on a "common formula", and pledges its readiness to co-operate with the Chairman of the Ad hoc Committee, Ambassador Ardekani of Iran.

In conclusion, I do hope that this year the Conference will do its utmost to bring to fruition the impetus it got from the Paris Conference and the forty-third session of the United Nations General Assembly. It is high time for the tail-winds which have considerably improved the climate in international relations also to fill other big sails in the Conference's ship. That requires political good will from every delegation and, as a matter of fact, from all of us.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Bulgaria for his statement, and for the kind words that he addressed to me. I now give the floor to the representative of Nigeria, Ambassador Azikiwe.

Mr. AZIKIWE (Nigeria): Mr. President, may I, on behalf of the Nigerian delegation, add my voice to the expressions of warm sentiments which you have already received and convey my delegation's satisfaction on the successful manner in which you have presided over the affairs of the Conference on

(Mr. Azikiwe, Nigeria)

Disarmament for the month of February? May I also welcome our new colleagues, the Ambassadors of Australia, Belgium, Burma, Czechoslovakia, the German Democratic Republic, India, Pakistan and Sweden, who have recently joined us? I assure the distinguished Ambassadors of the close co-operation of my delegation.

This session is taking place at a time of considerable improvement in the international political climate. There is an atmosphere approaching optimism in the history of the disarmament process that did not exist two years ago when the global situation was fraught with danger, due to the unrestrained refinement and continuous accumulation of nuclear weapons. This augurs well for the United Nations, which has proved its value as an effective and indispensable instrument in the painstaking process of negotiating the settlement of regional conflicts.

The Nigerian delegation is, however, not here to assume the pretentious posture that the issues and problems of disarmament can be subjected to simplistic prescriptions. Indeed, as my Foreign Minister observed during the United Nations third special session on disarmament, "so long as the inordinate pursuit of national interests, conflicts of ideologies, the quest for domination and for spheres of influence and glaring social and economic inequalities that characterize international relations persist, so long will the instinct for the acquisition of means for offence or defence preoccupy the conduct of States and peoples."

To achieve peace, all nations must have confidence in its efficacy. Granted that small nations must be content with their physical heritage, the big nations, especially the nuclear-weapon States, must recognize the rights of the less endowed ones to exist in a peaceful environment. In our statement last March, I emphasized that we must strive to work out a system of security in which politics, not nuclear technology, is pre-eminent - a system in which peoples affirm their identity together and not in opposition to others.

With respect to the ongoing nuclear disarmament negotiations, my delegation is not unmindful of the progress made in the implementation of the Soviet-United States Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles. Its value lies in the promise of providing the basis for a more far-reaching agreement on the reduction of strategic nuclear weapons. As the distinguished representative of the Soviet Union rightly observed during his statement on 14 February, "today's realities are such that this dialogue requires continuing and active participation by all countries and all regions of the world. The internationalization of the dialogue and the negotiating process is necessary to bring harmony to international relations and put them on a more stable basis."

The cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament have long been considered the most urgent task before the Conference on Disarmament. Were the situation in which mankind finds itself as a result of the escalating arms race not so serious, many people would question the usefulness of our ritual general debate on nuclear disarmament. For there is an element of repetitiveness which ought to have become boring were the danger which evokes these annual repetitions not so menacing. If a problem can be solved by the amount of attention it has received, then the complete prohibition of all

(Mr. Azikiwe, Nigeria)

nuclear testing ought to have been achieved long ago. An agreement on the prohibition of nuclear tests would not only check the qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons, but also prevent their proliferation, both vertical and horizontal. This will mark a significant beginning of the assumption by the nuclear-weapon States of their obligation under the non-proliferation Treaty to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament.

The Fourth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons is scheduled for 1990. Indeed, the Preparatory Committee will hold its first session in New York during the first week of next May. The NPT was conceived as an important instrument to be complemented by other collateral measures for an effective régime of non-proliferation. It was not meant to constitute the whole structure. As you are aware, failure to adopt necessary complementary measures has already created sharp divisions and reduced its effectiveness.

I need hardly emphasize how crucial it is for progress on a comprehensive test-ban treaty to be evident before the commencement of the Review Conference. Nigeria has always felt, and it bears repetition, that as a party to the NPT we find it rather difficult to press other non-nuclear-weapon States to become parties when, despite the pleas of the international community, the nuclear-weapon States proceed at an alarming rate to conduct tests. A forward-looking decision by the Conference on a comprehensive test-ban treaty is absolutely essential for the preservation of the régime of non-proliferation embodied in the NPT. Indeed, a comprehensive test-ban treaty is potentially less restrictive and might open the way for non-signatories of the NPT to become parties.

The commitment of the nuclear-weapon States in negotiating a comprehensive test-ban treaty is no doubt essential. Similarly, the role of the Conference on Disarmament in negotiating such a treaty should never be in doubt. If it is to discharge its responsibility as the single multilateral negotiating body, the Conference should commence without further delay negotiations on the achievement of nuclear disarmament in accordance with paragraph 50 of the Final Document of the first special session on disarmament. A major ingredient for success is flexibility or good will on the part of the delegations, especially those from nuclear-weapon States. But is this good will forthcoming? We also need to demonstrate the political will to accomplish the entire process in the shortest possible time, otherwise the ultimate goal of general and complete disarmament will continue to elude us.

One area for disarmament efforts which is increasingly gaining attention is the regional approach, to which some delegations have made reference in the course of their statements. In particular, reference has been made to the negotiations on further confidence- and security-building measures and on conventional disarmament in Europe scheduled in Vienna next month. My delegation is aware that States in any region are the best judge of their requirements, and any initiative will have to emanate from them. Obviously, such a regional approach can facilitate global disarmament provided it is not pursued at the expense of overall multilateral efforts towards complete and general disarmament.

(Mr. Azikiwe, Nigeria)

All the same, if regional efforts are to contribute effectively to the global disarmament process, the United Nations will have to assume its responsibility in providing assistance in the painstaking process of negotiating the terms of settlement. The more events unfold in various parts of the world, the more caution is required in the approach to the concept of confidence-building measures, which should be based on trust and good will among States. In a region where there exists no trust whatsoever between States, where clearly one State is bent on destabilizing the entire region, it will be premature to think of possible ways of creating confidence.

The nuclear weapon programme of South Africa is in direct contrast to the expressed wishes and aspirations of Africa, and a threat to their collective wish for a nuclear-weapon-free zone. The Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa bears true testimony to this honest intention. The realization of this noble objective has been frustrated by the Pretoria régime. Three years ago, it was reported that South Africa had gone on a recruitment drive to attract nuclear scientists to assist in its research. It has now been established that Pretoria has amassed sufficient uranium to produce up to 21 nuclear warheads. This will no doubt confer on the Pretoria régime the status of a nuclear Power. Notwithstanding their isolation, they cannot be trifled with. How, then, can the best of their friends be certain of the channel to which they direct their nuclear programme when South Africa is not a signatory of the NPT, the legally binding instrument forbidding nuclear weapon acquisition? Surely it would be unrealistic to expect the African States to place the safety of their region from nuclear attack in the custody of the Pretoria régime, which has repeatedly conceived such weapons as a clear military option.

My delegation is satisfied that the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons has got off to a good start this session under the able guidance of Ambassador Pierre Morel of France, whose constructive contribution towards the realization and successful outcome of the Paris Conference last January received commendations from most delegations. Nigeria's Government's appreciation to the Government of France for hosting the Conference of States Parties to the 1925 Geneva Protocol and Other Interested States was highlighted in our statement.

The prospects of concluding an effective and verifiable chemical weapons convention are now far more promising, and will eventually lead to a complete ban on the use of chemical weapons as well as their development, production and stockpiling, and the destruction of all existing chemical weapons. Much work has now been done on the draft, and its conclusion is now in sight. We note with satisfaction that the convention will have a distinct advantage over the Geneva Protocol as it will ensure the non-use of chemical weapons through total elimination.

There are still a number of outstanding issues under consideration. Apart from the exact definition and elimination of production facilities, there are still activities not covered by the convention. Even though we all agree that the convention should provide an effective mechanism for verification, how do we ensure that the chemical industry is not used in producing chemical weapons? I need not emphasize that some work still remains to be done on the question of challenge inspection or limited spot check

(Mr. Azikiwe, Nigeria)

arrangements to ensure that the equal rights of all States can be guaranteed. We hope that the Ad hoc Committee will intensify its efforts to conclude the outstanding work on the convention at the earliest possible time. A spirit of mutual concession and mature compromise is required at this stage to overcome the outstanding differences.

Just as we are worried about the extreme danger posed by the use of chemical weapons, we are also concerned about the prohibition of the dumping of radioactive wastes for hostile purposes. The Nigerian delegation has made its position clear on this matter, and followed this up by co-sponsoring a resolution at the forty-third session of the United Nations General Assembly requesting the Conference on Disarmament to take into account, in the ongoing negotiation for a convention on the prohibition of radiological weapons, the deliberate employment of nuclear wastes to cause destruction, damage or injury by means of radiation produced by the decay of such material. It will be recalled that the Secretary-General was requested to transmit to the Conference on Disarmament all documents relating to the consideration of this item by the General Assembly at its forty-third session.

The Ad hoc Committee on Radiological Weapons will soon commence its work. The identification of the basic elements of a future convention, and the elaboration of a text for each element will enable the Committee to harmonize its views, leading to an agreed text. My delegation is aware of some views expressed within this body on the non-existence of radiological weapons and the narrow chances of their being used in warfare. However, the dumping of radioactive wastes for hostile purposes has been identified as an effective means of conducting radiological warfare. This underlines the importance my delegation attaches to this item. In any case, we all subscribe to paragraph 76 of the Final Document of SSOD-I which states inter alia that "a convention should be concluded prohibiting the development, production, stockpiling and use of radiological weapons".

Soon, active work will commence in the Ad hoc Committee on negative security assurances. My delegation hopes that the Committee will succeed in the search for an appropriate formula this year to facilitate substantive work on the item. Either security for all States will have to be sought in ways other than the possession of nuclear weapons, or all States should be accorded the right to determine the means, including the possession of nuclear weapons, for protecting their security. All the same, Nigeria's commitment to the non-proliferation régime still remains firm.

My delegation has a long tradition in participating in the work of the Conference on Disarmament. We are here because we believe the items on the agenda are of a global nature and the issues under consideration are vitally important. Pursuing negotiations in good faith implies, as a minimum, transparency in the desire to achieve results.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Nigeria for his statement, and for the kind words that he addressed to the Chair. I should now like to give the floor to the representative of Indonesia, Ambassador Loeis.

Mr. LOEIS (Indonesia): In my statement today I wish to touch upon item 4 of our agenda, concerning chemical weapons. This is an item in which we have invested much time and effort, and it continues to be the most promising work of the Conference on Disarmament. Before I proceed with my statement, however, may I at the outset congratulate you upon your assumption of the highest office of the Conference, as well as for your exemplary stewardship in guiding the Conference on Disarmament during this usually difficult month of February? At the same time I should like to express the appreciation of my delegation to Ambassador Ardekani of Iran for the excellent manner in which he presided over our deliberations in the month of September.

I also avail myself of this opportunity to extend a warm welcome to our new colleagues Ambassador Kikanke, Ambassador Kamal, Ambassador Hyltenius, Ambassador Reese, Ambassador Dietze, Ambassador Houllez and Ambassador Vajnar, who have joined us since the start of our spring session, and to assure them of my delegation's readiness to continue to co-operate with their delegations. Through you, Sir, may I request our new colleagues to convey my gratitude to their predecessors for the co-operation they have extended to the members of my delegation and myself, and to wish them every success in their new posts?

Despite being confronted with a serious situation and various obstacles last year, nevertheless the international community was able to pronounce again its willingness to get rid of chemical weapons once and for all from the arsenals of nations. Through resolutions 43/74 A and C, the United Nations General Assembly unanimously urged the Conference on Disarmament to intensify its negotiations with a view to finalizing at the earliest possible date a convention on the prohibition of the development, production, stockpiling and use of chemical weapons and on their destruction. The Paris Conference on the prohibition of chemical weapons also called on the Conference on Disarmament to resolve expeditiously the remaining issues in the negotiations and to conclude such a convention at the earliest possible date.

In order to capture and put into practice the spirit contained in those resolutions, the Group of 21 tabled a proposal on 7 February 1989 for a slight change in the mandate of the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons. Given the urgency of finalizing the draft convention and its importance to the process of multilateral disarmament, the Group of 21 is also willing to assume greater responsibility this year by chairing three out of the five working groups. As is well known, it is within these working groups that the real negotiation will take place. I hope that the disagreement on the question of the mandate at the beginning of our session was not a sign of a lack of political will to implement those resolutions, but is due to certain unavoidable temporary circumstances. In this connection we took note of the readiness of the Soviet Union to go forward with the negotiation, as stressed by Ambassador Nazarkin last week, as well as the commitment of the President of the United States of America, George Bush, to treat efforts to ban chemical weapons as one of his priorities.

Indeed, efforts have to be exerted in order to avoid the recurrence of last year's experience, where, in the words of Ambassador Ekéus on 13 September 1988, "our work in 1988 has fallen short of the repeated calls for renewed or even continuing urgency. Some important issues have hardly

(Mr. Loeis, Indonesia)

been addressed; solving others has taken unnecessary time and effort". It was only due to the untiring efforts of the chairmen of the Committee and the three working groups that the Committee managed to keep the negotiation continuing and in the end gain certain concrete results. The work of Ambassador Sujka, Mr. Numata, Mr. Macedo and Mr. Cima merits our thanks.

At this juncture, I wish to welcome the appointment of Ambassador Morel of France as the new Chairman of the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons. His diligence and excellent stewardship during the preparatory stage, which made the Paris Conference successful, are well known to us. His chairmanship of the Committee, as well as the presence of Foreign Minister Roland Dumas in the plenary session, raise hopes on the implementation of one of the most important aims of the Paris Conference, which is to give impetus to our negotiation here in the Conference on Disarmament. My delegation looks forward to the Committee resolving the remaining issues this year.

As stated in the programme of work of the Committee for this spring session, one area of our future work is the relation between the future convention and the 1925 Geneva Protocol. In-depth negotiations have taken place on this question, including in the open-ended consultations in 1985 chaired by a member of the Indonesian delegation. Some concrete results have already been achieved, such as the formulation of the preamble and a short paragraph 3 of article I, which simply states that each State party undertakes not to use chemical weapons.

Article IX concerning on-site inspection on challenge is one major issue which needs to be tackled straightforwardly this year. Much time has been invested in this subject, and attempts have been made to formulate the necessary paragraph, as in 1986, when Indonesia provided the Chairman of then Working Group C. In 1987, the Chairman of the Committee himself, Ambassador Ekéus of Sweden, presided over the negotiations, and concrete results were achieved, as appeared in appendix II of document CD/881. The time has come to capitalize on this paper by using it as a basis for further negotiations.

Speaking on the question of verification as a whole, we believe that the verification system envisaged in the "rolling text" is adequate to deter prohibited activities. Nevertheless, we see some good points in the efforts to close the so-called "verification gap" or in the need to search for a type of "non-confrontational inspection" short of on-site challenge inspection, and we will keep an open mind on these issues. In the meantime my delegation is now in the process of studying the papers presented by the Chairman of Working Group 1.

My delegation awaits with interest the result of our discussion in Working Group 3 concerning article VII. As is well known, this article as it appears in the "rolling text" was formulated years ago and had never been discussed until last Tuesday. Since various parts of the "rolling text" had not yet been negotiated and drafted, attempts were understandably made in the formulation of article VII to include as many important rights and obligations of States parties as could be thought of at that time. Now the situation is very different. The "rolling text" is more developed, and the negotiations on important aspects such as verification have advanced, resulting in a high

(Mr. Loeis, Indonesia)

degree of mutual understanding. Accordingly, certain adjustments are needed. One of them concerns national technical means. I believe there is already a consensus that for the purposes of the convention verification activities, be they systematic or on challenge, should be carried out by the international inspectors. I do understand that States parties may wish to, and have the right to, establish national technical means to carry out inspections within their countries; but that would be strictly an internal affair of those countries and would have no direct relevance to the convention. Therefore, we should leave this issue to those countries alone, and the convention should not interfere with their work.

In the efforts to solve the issue of jurisdiction and control and at the request of the Chairman of the Committee, a working paper was produced in 1987 by Dr. Bolewski of the Federal Republic of Germany, Dr. Szénási of Hungary and a member of my delegation. As indicated in their report, the discussion and drafting should be directed towards defining the obligations or responsibilities of the States parties, which include all the subjects relevance to the convention, to avoid difficulties in legal interpretation of attribution as well as to prevent legal "loopholes" in the convention.

These are some of the issues and, of course, there are also other more important ones which remain to be negotiated. On those issues we have also various working papers, and these papers are not only national papers, but papers produced by previous chairmen of the Committee or by the respective working groups, as well as by various "friends of the Chair". Some of them have even been negotiated and revised.

The point that I wish to raise by way of conclusion concerns continuity and consistency. We already have the "rolling text" and various working papers, and we should benefit from them or refer to them during the course of our negotiations. I do realize that the finalization of a paragraph or an article often depends upon the result of negotiation in another part of the "rolling text", and at the same time there is no denying that it would be practically impossible for the Committee to devote simultaneous attention and equal time to each of the remaining issues in our negotiation. Thus the risk of inadvertently overlooking the problem of this interdependence cannot be underestimated. However, whatever the method in approaching this problem will be, care should be taken in order to avoid as far as possible the danger of unravelling tentative agreements or the springing up of footnotes and brackets on already agreed paragraphs or articles.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Indonesia for his statement, and for the kind words that he addressed to the Chair. I have no other speakers on my list for today. Does any other delegation wish to take the floor?

I have requested the secretariat to circulate today a timetable of meetings to be held by the Conference and its subsidiary bodies next week. In this connection I wish to inform you that the Chairman of the Ad hoc Committee on Effective International Arrangements to Assure Non-nuclear-weapon States

Against the Use or Threat of Use of Nuclear Weapons is also convening a meeting of that subsidiary body on Friday, 3 March at 3 p.m. in this conference room. The secretariat will therefore issue a revision to the timetable, which will be circulated in the delegation's pigeon-holes.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: I have no other business for today. I now intend to adjourn this plenary meeting.

The meeting rose at 12 noon.